211. 7

A GODLY and learned Sermon, preached before an honourable auditorie the 26. day of Februarie. 1580.

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¶ Imprinted by *Henrie Middleton* for Thomas Man.

A GODLY AND learned Sermon, Preached *in Lent last.* 1580.

THE place of ſcripture (moſte honourable and welbeloued in our Sauiour Chriſt) which I haue choſen to entreate of, is written in the 24. Chapter of the ſecond booke of Samuel in theſe words.

Verſ. 1. *And the wrath of the Lorde was yet more kindled againſt Iſrael, and he moued Dauid againſt them, in that he ſaide, goe number Iſrael and Iuda, &c.*

The whole Scripture of God (as the holy Apoſtle S. Iames teacheth) is cõpared to a glaſſe, wherein al eſtats and degrees may ſee, what to imbrace and what to eſchew: and it is cõmonly ſaid of al hiſtories, that they are ẏ looking

glaſſes of mans life . Therefore this text beeing both a ſtory and parcel of holy Scripture, muſt needes be a moſt cleare glaſſe, in which are repreſented vnto vs diuers things worthie to bee ſeene & looked vpon. Among which I haue thought good to ſhew vnto you three eſpeciall and moſt notable images. The firſt, is the iuſtice and righteouſnes of God, the ſecond, is the malice of Sathan, the thirde is the frailtie of man: not meaning to deſcribe them all at large, which would require much longer time then is graũted to this exerciſe: but onely to ſhewe euerie one of them ſo farre foorth as it is ſet forth with in ỹ compaſſe of this text which I haue read vnto you. Concerning the firſte therefore, which is the iuſtice of God, it is deſcribed in theſe wordes. *And the wrath of the Lord was yet more kindled againſt Iſrael, &c.* By the wrath of the Lorde is here ment, the iuſtice of God prouoked to puniſh ſinnes, as in an hũdreth places of ſcripture beſides. By the wrath of the Lorde therefore, wee muſt not vnderſtand any paſſion,

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or disordered affection, such as is the wrath of man, of which the Apostle saith, that it worketh not ỹ righteousnes of God, but is often prouoked with small causes, or with no worthie causes at all, and yet boileth immoderately in the hart of man, whereby he is vnmeasurablie desirous of reuengement: but the iustice of God, which is figuratiuely called his wrath, is neuer stirred vp to reuengement, but vppon great and waightie causes, neither rageth with blinde furie, but keepeth a most perfect moderation in all things. And there are two reasons which may be yeelded of this figuratiue speache, wherefore Gods righteousnes is called his wrath, the first is to strike through our heartes with terrour of his iustice, for the name of wrath is more terrible then the name of iustice, and our nature is more familierly acquainted with the one, thē with the other, ỹ wrath of a mā if he be of power to hurt, is greatly feared. The wrath of a Prince saith Salomon in the 16. chapter of the prouerbs is the messenger of death: howe

much more ỹ wrath of ỹ Lord of hoſts in cõpariſon of whoſe power & glorie al earthly princes are but duſt & aſhes. The ſecond reaſõ why ỹ iuſtice of god is called the wrath of God, is that we may learne and vnderſtand, that as the wrath of mã wherwith we are acquainted is not pacified but by two meanes, either by reconciliatiõ or reuengemẽt, ſo it is with the iuſtice of God. Therefore when ſoeuer wee haue prouoked ỹ wrath of God againſt vs by our ſins and wickednes: (which we doe daily and hourely) we muſt either ſeeke to be recõciled to him by true repentãce, or elſe looke for ſharpe puniſhment: we muſt either humbly ſubmit our ſelues, acknowledge our offences & hũbly deſire pardon, or els we muſt aſſure our ſelues ỹ the wrath of the Lord being once kindled againſt vs, there is no way to eſcape vengeance. We ſee now wherefore the iuſtice of God is called the wrath of God. Now muſt we looke for what cauſe the wrath of God was kindled againſt Iſrael: & how the Iſraelites had prouoked the iuſtice of god to puniſh them, The cauſe in deede is

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not ſet downe in expreſſe wordes, but it is eaſie to gather by the effect: for it is manifeſt, ẏ when the iuſtice of God is kindled againſt Iſrael, it is for none other cauſe but for their ſinnes, & it is needles to inquire what particuler ſins were the cauſe: for it was not one or two, but all kind of ſinnes, & eſpecially their vnthankefulnes: for the Lord had giuen them Dauid a moſt excellent gouernour, who both had eſtabliſhed the puritie & ſinceritie of Gods true religion, and alſo had kept them in peace & trãquillity, for many yeres together. But as it vſually cõmeth to paſſe through the corrupt nature of man, which is made inſolẽt with proſperitie, ẏ people not conſidering thoſe gret benefits of God, were not onely vnthankful to him for ſo happy a gouernmẽt, but followed euery one the luſtes of his owne hart, not fearing to trãſgreſſe ẏ cõmandements of the Lord: but yet retaining an outward forme of Godlines by external exerciſe of religion, the vertue & power whereof they denied in life & cõuerſation, and ſo prouoked ẏ wrath

of the Lord of hoaſtes to be kindled againſt thē: but we muſt conſider wherfore ẏ ſcripture ſaith *The wrath of the lord proceded or was yet more kindled*, you muſt vnderſtād as we read in ẏ 21. cha. of this booke, ẏ the wrath of the Lorde was kindled before this time againſt ẏ people, ſo ẏ he plagued thē with three yeares famin for the crueltie that Saul, to gratifie them, committed againſt the Gibeonites whō he had ſlain, & ſought to root out cōtrarie to a couenant whiche their auncetors had made, & confirmed with a ſolemne oath, in ẏ days of Ioſua. Theſe three yeeres of hunger were now paſt, & this was the fourth yeere in which God after he had auenged the bloud of the Gibeonites vpon the poſterite of Saul, had reſtored plētie and aboundance of al things for the maintenance of mans life, with externall peace & proſperitie: for which benefits & bleſſings of God beſtowed vpō thē, they were boūd to haue ſerued God in holines and righteouſnes before him all ẏ dayes of their life: like as by the former plague they were ad-

admoniſhed to forſake their ſinnes, which were the cauſe thereof, and truly to turne to him. But they cleane cõtrariwiſe abuſing his mercy, tooke occaſion to prouoke his iuſtice, euen as the froward nature of man is: ſo long as they are plagued, and the hande of the Lord is heauie on them, they humble them ſelues before him, or at leaſt pretend ſo to doe: but when the plague is ſeaced, and they find them ſelues relieued, they returne againe to their former wickedneſſe. So was it with the Iſraelites, they had bene puniſhed with famine, but they were not thereby reformed, and therefore the wrath of the Lord is ſtill kindled againſt them. By which example we ought to be admoniſhed, that we deceiue not our ſelues after the maner of the world, to thinke that the wrath of the Lord ſhal be turned from vs before we turne from our ſinnes: wherefore let vs not flatter our ſelues as the reprobate doe, when they haue eſcaped ſome particular puniſhment, this daunger is ouercome, this brunt is paſt, this ſtorme is blowen o-

uer &c. For ſo long as we continue in our ſinnes, and ſeeke not to be reconciled vnto the Lorde, the wrath of the Lorde will be ſtill kindled againſt vs, yea more and more prouoked to puniſh vs : and if one plague be ceaſed, an other ſhall beginne: when famine is ſtayed, the peſtilence ſhall rage : and if that will not reforme vs, ſome other plague ſhall be ſent vpon vs. The Lord can want no whippes, ſo long as his wrath is bent to ſcourge vs, therefore let vs not obſtinately ſet our ſelues againſt him, to trye whether he will be ſoner wearied in ſtriking, or we in bearing his ſtripes : but let vs humbly and at once caſt downe ourſelues, acknowledge our ſinnes, be ſorie for them, and forſake them : and then the way to reconciliation ſhall be opened by our Lorde and Sauiour Ieſus Chriſte, in whome the Lorde ſhall be pleaſed with vs, and his wrath pacified towards vs. We haue further to note the reaſon of the metaphor, when the holy Ghoſt ſaith : *The wrath of the Lord was kindled*, which kinde of ſpeach is very often

often vſed in the Scripture, to compare the wrath of God to fire, whoſe force when it hath taken ſtrength, can not eaſily be ſtayed, and whoſe propertie is to conſume all things that miniſtreth matter vnto it: and for that cauſe the Lord him ſelfe in reſpect of his iuſtice, is called a conſuming fire. To the end therefore that we ſhould ſtand in feare of Gods iuſtice: and that we ſhould be as carefull not to prouoke his wrath againſt vs, as we are carefull not to miniſter matter vnto fire, which will be readie to conſume our ſelues, and all that euer we haue: our GOD is ſaide to be a conſuming fire: and the wrath of the Lord is ſaide to be kindled againſt vs. Therefore as there is no dallying with fire, when any light ſubſtance is neare which is readie to take flame: ſo there is no diſſembling before God, the fire of whoſe wrath and iuſtice is kindled with our ſinnes & wickednes: for as ỹ Lord hateth & abhorreth all ſinnes and vngodlines, ſo his iuſtice is kindled like fire againſt ỹ ſame, to purge and cleanſe the world of all vn-

vnrighteouſneſſe. Let not ſinners therfore thinke to ſtande in his preſence, which is a conſuming fire, before whō they ſhall melt euen as waxe, and vaniſh away as ſmoake, before whome they ſhall be as ſtubble and chaffe, that is ſet on fire, and can not be quenched. And let vs which truſt in his mercy, not be high minded, but ſtande in awe of his iuſtice, and prouoke not his wrath to bekindled againſt vs through our manifold ſinnes and wickedneſſe, whoſe wrath if it be but a little kindled as the prophet ſaith, no man is able to ſtand in the preſence of his iuſtice, but it will appeare howe happie they are which put their truſt in his mercy. And if the wrath of God being but a little kindled hath ſo notable effect: what is to be looked for, when it is wholy inflamed in furie againſt vs, for groſſe & manifeſt contempt of his glorious maieſtie? For as contempt in men is the chiefeſt cauſe in prouoking them to anger, and the greateſt contempt prouoketh the greateſt anger: ſo it is with the Lorde, whoſe iuſtice is deſpiſed in

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all ſinne, and diſobedience of his lawe: but chiefly in that prophane and profeſſed contempt, which we ſee to beare the ſway among great numbers of the wicked, which openly and without all feare of his iuſtice, haue ſolde them ſelues like Achab, to commit all manner of ſinne with greedineſſe. Thus we ſee what the ſpirite of God meaneth, when he ſaith: *The wrath of God was yet more kindled againſt Iſrael.*

Nowe we haue to conſider howe it ſtandeth with the iuſtice & righteouſneſſe of God, that Iſrael hauing prouoked the wrath of God, the heart of Dauid is moued to number the people: that the wrath of the Lord being kindled againſt Iſrael, he ſtirred vp Dauid againſt them. For it ſeemeth contrarie to reaſon, that the people hauing deſerued puniſhment, the Lorde ſhould deale with the Prince for them. But for ſo much as the Prince is as it were, an helme or ſterne, by which the Lord gouerneth the whole comminaltie of people which the Lord hath committed to their charge, it ſtandeth well

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with his iuſtice and wiſedome alſo, to moue and ſtirre vp the Prince againſt them, when ſo euer their tranſgreſſions ſhall prouoke his righteouſneſſe to chaſten them. And euen ſo ſaith Salomon, Prouer. 21. *As the ſtreames of waters*, or as it is nowe tranſlated, *as a veſſell in the ſtreams of waters, ſo is the kings hart in the hand of the Lord, & whether-ſoeuer he will he inclineth and moueth it, eyther to the hauen of proſperitie, if the people ſerue him, or to the ſhoare of danger and aduerſitie, if they prouoke his wrath againſt them.* Therefore as the ſtirring of a ſhippe by the maſter directeth the ſhippe whither he thinketh good: euen ſo the Lord moueth the heartes of all Princes, which are as the ſterne of the ſhippe of the common wealth in his hand, that they are not carried at all aduentures whither the ſtream of waters will driue them, but whither ſo euer it pleaſeth him: either to the great and ſingular benefite of that people which feareth the Lord, or for the correction and puniſhment of them which tranſgreſſe his lawes, and contemne his

his iuſtice. Ye heare nowe howe well it agreeth, not onely with the iuſtice, but alſo with the wiſedome of God, that he ſhould moue the heart of the king according to the diſpoſition of the people. Beſides this, we muſt alſo vnderſtand, that as Princes are publique perſons in reſpect of their gouernemẽt of whole nations committed to their charge, ſo alſo before the Lord, they are priuate perſons, to be called to account, not only for ſuch things as they do in their publique gouernement, but alſo for ſuch offences as they commit priuatly, as the ſonnes of Adam: Among which there is none found ſo righteous, but that in many things they tranſgreſſe the lawe of God: and therefore the iuſtice of God is not to be accuſed of any vnrighteouſneſſe, when the people haue prouoked his wrath, and Dauid can not iuſtifie him ſelfe before him, if he ſtirre vp Dauids heart againſte the people for their puniſhment, and take occaſion of the peoples ſinnes to puniſh Dauid him ſelfe.

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For although here is no tranſgreſſion of Dauid expreſſed, wherby he might ſeeme to haue brought this puniſhment vpon him, yet Dauid him ſelfe will confeſſe, that there was alwayes ſufficient cauſe in him, why the Lorde might chaſtiſe him: for ſo he acknowledgeth in the 51. Pſalme, that not only for that groſſe and notorious ſinne of adulterie and murther, he had deſerued Gods vengeance, but generally he accuſeth his whole life of ſinne, and tranſgreſſion of Gods lawes, that the wrath of God in his puniſhmēts, what ſo euer it ſhould pleaſe him to lay on him, might of al the world be acknowledged to be iuſt and righteous. For thus he cryeth, *Againſt thee, againſt thee (O Lorde) I haue ſinned:* that is, I haue done nothing but ſinned, & done that which is euill in thy ſight, that thou mighteſt be iuſtified in thy ſayings, and haue the vpper hande when thou art iudged. And leaſt we ſhould thinke that he ſpeaketh of ſome ſhort time of his life, in which the diuell had ſo greatly preuayled with him, he declareth

clareth in the next verſe, that it was euen from his natiuitie, yea frō his conception, that this corruption hath remayned in him, which is contrarie to the righteouſneſſe of God. *Behold* (ſaith he) *I was borne in ſinne, and in iniquitie did my mother conceiue me, whereas thou louest trueth in the inward partes.* This cōfeſſion of Dauid therefore, is ſufficient to cleare the Lorde from all vnrighteouſneſſe, and to ſhewe manifeſtly, that Dauid is not puniſhed for the peoples ſinnes as an innocent, which hath deſerued nothing in his owne perſon, nor is beaten altogether for the faultes of other mē, which could not ſtand with Gods righteouſneſſe, except in that caſe, where our ſauiour Chriſt willingly offered him ſelfe to be puniſhed for our tranſgreſſions. But here the Iſraelites prouoking the wrath of the Lord, deſerued ẏ a good gouernour ſhould decline out of ẏ right courſe for their puniſhment. And Dauid him ſelfe can not deny, but ẏ when ſo euer the Lord ſhal chaſtice him, he ſhal not do it without his deſerts. So ẏ euery way it ſtan-

deth with Gods righteouſnes, that Iſrael hauing cauſed his wrath to be kindled againſt him, he ſhould ſtirre vp Dauid whome he had giuen to them, being a moſt excellent Prince for their benefit, nowe to giue occaſion of their puniſhment. But againſt this doctrine of the iuſtice and righteouſnes of god, two kind of aduerſaries do riſe vp. The firſt are the Pelagians, and Papiſts ſo farre as they agree with the Pelagians. The ſecond are the Atheiſtes: the former ſort reaſon after this manner. If you ſay ẏ God moued Dauid to number ẏ people, which was ſinne, do you not thereby make God ẏ author of ſin? God forbid: let God onely be righteous, and all men ſinners. For he only is holy, he only is pure frō al corruptiō, and there is no vnrighteouſnes in him. But howe can you auoyde that inconuenience (ſay they) that followeth of this aſſertion: God moued Dauid to do that wherwith he was diſpleaſed, therfore he was the cauſe of the ſinne in Dauid. It is eaſily auoyded. For the ſame ſtorie is ſet downe in 1. Chro. 21.

Chapter

Chap. where it is ſaid, that Satan or the aduerſarie ſtoode vp againſt Iſrael, and moued the hart of Dauid to number ỹ people: by conference of which place of Scripture with this my text, we may ſee how God moued Dauid to number the people, and yet moueth him to no ſinne. For whereas it is here ſaide, that the Lorde was angrie with Iſrael, and moued Dauid againſt them (for we can not aptly vnderſtand any other, but either the Lord, or the wrath of the Lord which moued him) and in the Chronicles it is ſaide, that Sathan moued him, it is manifeſt, that God and the diuell concurre in one action. God as a moſt righteous iudge, and Sathan as a moſt malicious enimie. By which we ſe that there proceedeth nothing from GOD but iuſtice, and that the ſinne which is euill commeth from the diuell: ſo that the Lord God, although he be the firſt mouer in all our actions (for in him we liue, and moue, and haue our being) yet he is not authour or cauſe of any euill in vs. Neuertheleſſe, hee vſeth Sathan to puniſh vs, who although hee

be a malitious enimie, yet is he a minister of ỹ righteous iudgement of God, although against his will: and euen then when he oppoſeth him ſelfe against God. For Sathan is not ſuffered to reigne and rage at his pleaſure against the elect of GOD, for then he would in one moment ouerthrow the whole Church of Chriſte, but kept in chaines of darkneſſe, ſo that he can not ſtirre, but where and when it pleaſeth God in iuſtice to vſe his miniſterie and ſeruice. Therefore when the wrath of the Lorde was kindled againſt Iſrael, Sathan alſo ſtandeth vp againſt Iſrael as a miniſter of Gods wrath, by neceſſitie of Gods ordinance, though a cruell aduerſarie by his owne will and malicious affection. So that neither by colour of this texte, nor of any o-other in the whole Scripture, the Lord can be charged as the cauſe of the ſame euill which he puniſheth either in the elect, or in the reprobate, for what ſo euer proceedeth from him, as it proceedeth from him is good, and to a good end, who vſeth well euen Sathan the aduer-

aduerſarie of all goodneſſe, and his members the reprobate: and ſo ordereth, brideleth, and gouerneth their ſinnes and wickednes, that euen their euill he turneth to good,& out of their wickedneſſe as it were, light out of darkeneſſe bringeth his glorie. So he hardened the heart of Pharao, yet was he not the cauſe of Pharaos ſinne, but the cauſe was in Pharao him ſelfe,who of his owne corruption did ſet him ſelf againſt God:and of Sathan,who ruleth in the reprobate, and ſtirreth him vp to rebellion, and obſtinate reſiſting of Gods commandements. Thus was the heart of Pharao hardened by God, as by a righteous iudge:by Sathan,as by a malicious enimie againſt God & mankind: by Pharao him ſelfe, as by a man who being cleane voyde of Gods ſpirite by corruption of his owne nature, is inclined to nothing but to contempt and diſobedience of God,and ỹ whole matter ſo ordered in all pointes by the diuine prouidence,that the glory of his iuſtice might be ſet foorth in Pharaos deſtruction, euen as ỹ Lord ſaith vnto

him *euen for this cauſe haue I ſtirred thee vp, that I might ſhewe foorth my power in thee, & that my name might be renouned in al the world.* Therefore the ſame God which maketh an hypocrite to reigne for the ſinnes of ỹ people, and giueth a king in his furie whom he taketh away againe in his indignation (as ỹ prophet ſaith) euen the ſame God, by the ſame authoritie, wiſdome, & iuſtice, moueth Dauid a good king againſt Iſrael, ỹ he might puniſh them without all contagion or infection of ỹ ſinne and euil by which he was moued to number ỹ people, which cauſed god to puniſh them, ſo ỹ although god giueth the firſt mouing, power, and ſtrength, in al maner of actions, which we muſt confeſſe to be good, as proceding from him, & ordreth & diſpoſeth al euil, which is a peruerting of ỹ good which cõmeth from God, & proceedeth from Satan & the corruptiõ of mans nature, ſo ỹ he conuerteth ỹ ſame alwayes in ỹ end to his glory, & the benefite of his elect, as we ſee in ỹ perſecution of ỹ wicked, & the infirmities of the godly: yet is he by no meanes

meanes to be charged as the author & cauſe of ſinne & euill. If this wil not ſatiſfie you, but ẏ you will further vrge me with that queſtiō of the Maniches, whence cōmeth euil, ſeing nothing but good cōmeth from God, & yet you affirme, ẏ God is the cauſe of all things. I wil anſwer as I haue learned out of the anciēt writers, who wer troubled with ẏ ſect of ẏ Maniches, which affirmed, ẏ there were two beginnings. When it pleaſed ẏ almightie to ſhew foorth his infinit power, wiſdom, & goodnes in ẏ creation of things viſible and inuiſible, bodily & ſpiritually, it pleaſed him for ẏ illuſtratiō & ſetting forth of ẏ glorie of his goodnes, to ordeine (for ſo they haue taught me to ſpeake) ẏ euil ſhuld proceed out of ẏ frewill of his reaſonable creatures. And this his ordinance is good. For although euil be naught, and curſed be he ẏ ſaith euill is good, yet ẏ there ſhuld be euill (which is Gods ordinance) it is excellēt good. If this ſeem ſtrange to any man, I wil make it plain by two manifeſt reaſons: the firſt is, the excellencie of goodnes can not ſo well

appeare & be knowne, as by ỹ compa-riſon of the contrarie, which is euill. Therefore it is perfect good, that euill ſhould be for the manifeſtation of that which is good, we ſee that in all ỹ crea-tures and workes of the world, GOD hath ordained that his glorie ſhould ſhine in contraries. As to the intent ỹ the beutie and glory of light ſhould be ſeene and knowne to be ſuch as it is, he hath ordained darkeneſſe. For if he had created light to be perpetual without any change of darknes, how had it ben poſſible for men, although liuing in the light, to haue knowne the excellencie of light, & ſo ſhould God haue ben de-frauded of ỹ glory of ſo beutifull, pro-fitable, and cõfortable a creature. Ther-fore euen as by darknes we learne how to eſteeme light, and by bitter that which is ſweete, and euery other thing by his contrarie: euen ſo by the defor-mitie of euill we are taught, howe great is the excellent comlines of that which is good, therfore the ordinance of god, that there ſhould be euill, is perfect good. Althtugh this reaſon be plaine inough,

inough, yet the ſecond reaſon is more manifeſt, euen to ỹ meaneſt capacities. For ỹ the glorie of gods mercie might appeare in the ſaluation of his electe, and his iuſtice in the condemnation of the reprobate, it was neceſſarie that there ſhoulde be euil and ſo neceſſary that otherwiſe there ſhould haue bene no matter for the mercie and iuſtice of God to worke vppon: For if there ſhoulde haue beene no ſinne nor euill, wherein ſhoulde the mercie of GOD in pardoning and forgiuing of ſinnes haue bene ſeene? if there ſhould haue beene no tranſgreſſion, howe ſhoulde the glorie of Gods iuſtice haue ſhined in puniſhment? Ye ſee therefore that God by no means may be compted the author of euill, which he hath not created, made or wrought, but ordeined that it ſhoulde proceede from the freewil of his reaſonable creatures for the illuſtration of his glorie. Let vs therefore tremble at his righteous iudgementes who doth all thinges according to the good pleaſure of hys will: and hath made the wicked man

for the daye of his wrath(as Salomon teſtifieth) andyet by no meanes is the cauſe of his wickednes. If any man bee not ſatiſfied with this anſwere, he may enter further into ỹ vnmeaſurable deapthe of Gods iudgement, into which he may rather finde an entraunce, thē a way out, except it bee to his euerlaſting deſtruction for his horrible preſumption. You haue heard nowe the iuſtice of God defended againſte the Pelagians and Papiſtes, it followeth that I ſpeake ſome thing to the confutation of the ſecond enemies thereof which are the Atheiſtes, who becauſe they will not bee troubled with ſuch thornie & doubtful queſtions, as theſe are, imagine that they haue founde an eaſie way vnto wiſedome, and a ſolutiō for all controuerſies of religion when they ſay in their harts there is no God. Againſt whoſe impietie & madnes, the time wil not ſerue me to ſpek ſo much as their wickednes deſerueth, & yet if time wold permit neuer ſo large a diſcourſe, I could ſay in effect no more againſt thē, then ỹ prophet Dauid writeth

teth in the 14. Pſalme. *Amar Hanabal.* The greateſt and moſt doltiſh foole of all fooles hath ſaid in heart, there is no God. But what meaneth the prophet ſo to befoole them, when of all other men they are, or woulde ſeeme to bee the fineſt witted, the beſt learned, and moſt full of all wiſedome and knowledge: euen becauſe of all other they are moſt voide of all true wiſedome, which althogh they fanſie to thẽ ſelues that they only haue found, yet is there not one among an hundreth that dare acknowledge it. A goodly wiſedome that they are aſhamed to profeſſe and ſtand in defẽce of it, for although they nouriſh that monſter in their hearts & are bold ſometimes to ſhew foorth the ſame, where they thinke themſelues to be the beſt learned: yet is ther not one of them that dare encounter with a Chriſtian Philoſopher, to mainetaine by reaſon that which they holde againſte all reaſon, they obiecte perhappes, you will oppreſſe them with the authoritie of Gods worde and the holye Scriptures, where vnto

they

they giue no credit, nay we wil lay the Bible aside, and dispute with them out of the great booke, euen out of the beutifull theater of the world in whose creation and preseruation if they can not reade written in great capitall letters, the almightie power, wisedome & goodnes, and the iustice and mercie of God in the gouernement thereof, they are the most blind, blockishe and vnsensible of all other creatures. And yet they fancie in their frensie that they haue founde out the greatest and the deepest point of wisedome, when they are fallen into the greatest absurditie or follie that can be. For what can bee more contrary to reason thē to affirme an effect without a cause or to followe their dreames, an eternall effect without an eternall cause? Therefore the holy Ghost most aptlie exprobrateth vnto them extreme follie, because by their monstruous position of denyinge God, they take away the fountaine of all knowledge and wisedome, that is, the cause of all thinges. But as the asse yeeldeth to no other reason, but to a clubbe

clubbe, so they are more worthie to be knocked downe with a betle, then to be confuted with anie reason, which no lesse then the authoritie of Gods word written in the scriptures, and the law of nature written in the hearts of all nations, is most contrarie and repugnant to their most foolish and damnable persuasion. The Lord deliuer vs from the deuices, practises, and doings of the Atheistes: as for their witt, learning, wisedome and reason, in which they please them selues aboue other men, we are nothing afraide of, if they durst take vppon them the defence of their diuelish persuasion, and let them assure them selues that the iustice of God which nowe they contemne, they shall hereafter feale, and howe soeuer they woulde flye from it, it shall finde them at the length, wherof a testimonie also remaineth stil in their conscience which the prophet in the Psalme forgetteth not to note where he saith, *There haue they feared, where there is no cause to feare*: For of all other these prophane Atheistes that can so boldlie

lie & luſtily deſpiſe God and his righteouſnes in any appearãce of daunger, yea where no daunger at all is, are moſt fearefull cowardes and trembling daſtards, and no meruaile: for what good courage can there be, where there is no hope but in this life, nor comforte of helpe, but in men which are not able to helpe themſelues. But I am to blame to vſe to much ſpeach againſt thẽ, who either heare it not, or though thei herd it, wold make no accompt of it, ſaying that it is not vnprofitable for the godly and religious to haue the madneſſe of theſe men made manifeſt, that they maye the more deteſte them, and better beware of them. Thus haue you heard the iuſtice of God deliuered frõ the malice of the greteſt enemies therof. God graunt that as manie of them as be recouerable, maye in time ſee againſt whome they haue beene bold to oppoſe them ſelues, and vnderſtanding howe little it is poſſible for them to preuaile, they may no more kick againſt the pricke, nor ſtriue againſte the ſtreame, but in all humilitie and ſub-

ſubmiſſion acknowledging their haynous rebellion, they may deſire rather to bee releeued by his mercie, then by contending anye longer to trie the rigor of his iuſtice. One other thinge more to bee noted in this example of Gods iuſtice, which the ſcripture teſtifieth: that the Lorde in his wrath remembreth his mercie towardes his elect, and that appeareth in this hiſtory. For when the people had prouoked the wrath of the Lorde to bee kindled againſte them, and that hee in iuſtice was to procure a puniſhmet and correction for their amendement: yet hee ſo ordered the whole matter by his merciful & deuine prouidence, that in the end it turned to ỹ ſinguler benefit of his Church, ſo that euen the rod by whiche he ſcourgeth thē, was a demōſtration of his mercie towardes them. For as it appeareth in the 22. Chap. of the booke of Chronicles, by occaſion of the plague which God ſent for the puniſhment of the peoples ſins, Dauid found out ỹ place which ỹ Lorde had appointed for ỹ building of his tēple.

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Marueilous therfore is the prouidence of the Lorde, which (as the wiſe man ſaith) extendeth it ſelfe from ende to ende mightelie, and diſpoſeth al things ſweetlie, and wonderfull is the louing kindnes and mercie of God towardes his electe, which euen then when his wrath is kindled againſt them, forgetteth not like a moſte louing father in chaſtening of their faults to ſeeke their amendement, and to change the verie correction and puniſhment it ſelfe into a ſinguler benefite and bleſſing. For what a ſinguler benefite was it to all the Church of Iſrael, when the Lorde had appointed his reſting place in Sion, and the building of his Temple in Hieruſalē, which place the Lord reueiled by occaſion of this puniſhment and Dauid perceiued that the Lorde had hearde his prayer, when he ſacrificed in the threſhing floure of Aranna the Iebuſite ſo that the angell was cōmaunded to put vp his ſword, and the peſtilence was ſtayed from raging any longer among the people. Wherefore we ſee that although the iuſtice of god

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in his puniſhment bee terrible for the time, yet in the ende he turneth all to the benefite of the faithfull. By which we learne not to be faint harted or diſcouraged, when the Lordes wrath is kindled againſt vs: but with patience to beare his anger, whē we haue ſinned againſt him, and with the eyes of faith to beholde his mercie, which he neuer forgetteth towardes his choſen, no not when hee dealeth moſte ſharply with them. For not onely his rodd & ſtaffe (as the Prophete ſaith) ſhall cōforte vs, as they are the tokens of his fatherly chaſtiſement for our reformation, but alſo the verie meanes whiche he prouideth for our puniſhment hee conuerteth oftentime to our benefite: thus doth faith ouercome the terrour of Gods iuſtice, when it aſſureth vs, that it is ſo far off, that the ſame ſhould take any place againſte vs for our deſtruction, in as much as it is ſatiſfied by the death of Ieſus Chriſt: that contrariewiſe his puniſhmentes are merciful, and his chaſtiſemēts are beneficial vnto vs. Onely let vs take heede that

we deſpiſe not his long ſuffering in his fauourable correctiō, leaſt with ẏ wicked we procure his warth to be vpon vs vnto ẏ end. An other leſſon, we haue to learne in this exāple of gods iuſtice, as profitable in all ages, ſo moſt neceſſarie in our time. The wrath of ẏ Lord was here kindled againſt Iſrael, for whoſe puniſhment Dauid is moued to number the people whence now proceedeth ẏ cauſe of this puniſhmēt? not frō ẏ gouernmēt of Dauid, but frō the ſins of the people. For while the people pleaſe God, & ſerue him according to his word, he bleſſed Dauid for their benefit in all his conſultations & affaires: but when ẏ people prouoke the wrath of God againſt thē, then is Dauid made an inſtrument for their puniſhment. It is not vnlike but the people in Dauids time among other their ſinns by which they prouoked Gods puniſhmēt, were alſo infected in this vice, ẏ they tooke vpon them, as it is vſuall with people that are vnthankful for the great trauel which princes beſtow in their gouernment, to enter into finding of faulte with

with ỹ ſtate of regiment, & to remoue the cauſe of their puniſhments frō thē ſelues, vnto him which had leſſe deſerued it. Neuertheles the holy ghoſt teſtifieth plainly ỹ the cauſe of this plague was not the ill demeanor of Dauid, but the ſinnes of Iſrael. Let Iſrael therfore walke in the ways of the Lord & ſerue him with an vpright hart, & there ſhall be no error in ỹ gouernmēt of Dauid, but he ſhal haue a proſperous raigne ouer them. A leſſon verie needfull for ỹ people of our dayes, who were neuer ſo curious to enquire of princes cauſes and matters of the ſtate, of which for want of knowledg they are meet to be no Iudges although they had authoritie, as they be in this time. But ſirs you forget your place, God hath made you ſubiects and not gouernours, to be gouerned, and not to rule, enter not therfore, neither intermedle you with princes matters, but enter into your ſelues & looke ỹ your ſinns & wickednes do not cauſe an error to be in the gouernment, for if there be any at any time, it proceedeth frō you, your ſinns are the

cauſe as it appeareth plainly in this exãple. The ſinnes of Iſrael prouoked the Lord to wrath, and then Dauids heart is moued to number the people. From whence proceede ill humors which trouble the head and cauſe it to ake, out of the head? no, they aſcende out of the bodie into the heade, and ſo cauſeth the heade to ake, and then the aking of the head is ỹ diſquietnes of all the body, and yet the cauſe isnot in the heade, but in the il humors which proceede from the bodie. Take heed therfore that ye miniſter no ill humors out of the body into the heade, and the head ſhall be well inough, able to gouerne the bodie. Looke therefore to ỹ purging of the bodie from ſinne and wickedneſſe, that no diſtemperature thereby doe riſe into the heade, and doubt you not, but the Lorde God as he hath alwaies hitherto, ſo he will frõ hence foorth direct the heade to your ſinguler benefite, quietnes, and commoditie: And in this behalfe wee haue earneſtly to pray to the Lorde for the preſeruation of our ſoueraigne, conſidering

dering howe greatly wee haue prouoked his wrath, and giuen him iuſt cauſe to withdrawe his bountifull graces frō her, which hitherto it hath pleaſed him moſte plenteouſly to beſtowe vppon her highnes to our ſinguler benefites and comfort, and likewiſe we haue to praiſe and magnifie the Lorde, for his infinite mercie, declared in his longe ſuffering and patience toward vs, who not withſtāding we haue ſo often, and ſo much prouoked him to indignatiō through our manifolde tranſgreſſions, contempt of his worde and vnthankefulnes: yet hath he ſo bleſſed her eſtate and gouernement, and that for ſo long time ouer vs, that ſearching all monumentes of ſtories from the beginning, the like examples of proſperous and peaceable regement ſhall neuer bee founde, I ſay the like happie and quiet gouernement in all godlineſſe and honeſty for ſo many yeres together, is not to bee ſhewed in this Iland out of any recordes of antiquitie. Turne ouer the booke hardly and ſpare not, and bring me foorth no ſmall examples, but only

lie ſuch as our moſte ſoueraigne Ladie may vouchſafe to excel, if euer the like proſperous & godly eſtat can be ſhewed of ſo long continuance. Let vs therfore yeeld glorie vnto his maieſtie, frō whoſe onely goodnes this, as all other goods gifts haue proceeded, & thankfull obedience vnto her highnes whō he hath vſed as a meane and inſtrumēt to procure all this happines vnto vs. And as wee haue thus longe enioyed this bleſſed gouernmēt, ſo that we may enioye it twiſe as many yeares or more if it be his will, let vs become humble ſutors to our heauenly father, that hee will bleſſe her maieſtie with longe life to the glorie of his name, and the benefite of his Church, but eſpecially conſidering wee haue prouoked the Lordes wrath to bee kindled againſte vs, let vs make haſt to bee reconciled vnto him by vnfayned and heartie repentaunce and amendement of life, for when the Lorde ſhall ſee vs turned truely vnto him, hee will turne from the fearceneſſe of his wrath, and turning awaye from vs all ſuch plagues

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and punishmentes as wee moste righteously haue deserued, hee will turne vnto vs the cheerefull light of hys countenance in Iesus Christ, in whom and for whome hee is well pleased with vs. And thus muche touching the righteousnesse of God, which is the first part.

The seconde poynte wee haue to consider is the malice of Sathan, whiche is noted to vs in the 21. Chapter of the first booke of Chronicles where it is saide, that Sathan stoode vppe against Israel, and moued the hearte of Dauid to number the people. Althoughe the malice of Sathan bee manifold, and almost infinite: yet I will note it in two pointes onelie, out of this texte. Firste in the person with whome he dealeth, and secondly in the sinne wherevnto hee prouoketh him. Concerning the first, it is said that Sathan stoode vp against Israel and moued the hearte of Dauid. For when Gods wrath was kindled agaynste Israel, Sathan was Gods minister to execute his iuste iudgemente, not of

obedience to God, but of malice to Israel. Therfore howe doth he execute it? he goeth streight to Dauid. For Sathan findinge himselfe loosed of that chaine by which he is restrayned from assaulting the people of God, whome hedefendeth with his grace, and boyling in malice againste the Church of GOD, whose prosperitie hee enuieth, and seeketh her destruction, imediately he setteth vppon the chiefe gouernour thereof. All his malice is against the Church of God, and therfore it is said, Sathan stoode vp againste Israel: but he knowing wher to do most mischiefe, beginneth to shew his malice against Dauid, he seeketh to infect the heade that he might destroye the whole body. He knoweth that a godly and vertuous prince is the principal instrument that God vseth amongst men to procure ỹ wealth of his Church and chosen people: and therefore of hatred against ỹ church, & rankor against gods people he seeketh by al meanes to corrupt a good prince, & to cause a godly gouernour to bee vnprofitable to thē:

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ſee therefore how great cauſe we haue with earneſt and daily praiers, to commend vnto the gratious protection of our God, the preſeruation of our godly Prince and Souereigne. Bicauſe we ſee the malice of Satan to be ſo great, ỹ whenſoeuer he is let looſe to ſtand vp againſt Iſrael, he will begin his aſſault, where he knoweth he may doe moſt hurt to the Church of GOD. And therefore not without cauſe the Apoſtle ſo vehemẽtly exhorteth, that prayers, ſupplications, interceſſions, and thankeſgiuings be made, ſpecially for Kings, and all that be in authoritie, bicauſe Sathans malice which he beareth againſt Gods Church, he ſeeketh ſpecially to execute by them whoſe power is greateſt, and whoſe example carieth the multitude after them. For euẽ as the Lorde in wiſedome and iuſtice vſeth to puniſh the people by their Princes, euen ſo Sathan of hatred and malice, ſeeketh the ouerthrowe of the Church by the ſame perſons. The ſecond point, wherein the malice of Sathan is to be conſidered, is the vice or

ſinne wherevnto he moued the heart of Dauid. The text ſaith, he moued Dauid to number the people. For a prince to nũber & muſter his people, of it ſelf it is no ſin, but a thing indifferẽt of his owne nature, which at ſometime is not only lawfull to do, but alſo neceſſarie: and therefore it is no hard matter to gather what ſinne Dauid committed in numbring the people, namely his heart by Sathan contrarie to his former faith and humble truſt in Gods promiſes, was lifted vp with pride and preſumption. For hauing no lawfull cauſe either Eccleſiaſticall to leuie a ſubſidie for the maintenance of Gods religion, as *Moſes* preſcribeth in the 30. of Exodus, or elſe ciuill, as was oftentimes lawfully practiſed in time of warre: he alledgeth only his vaine curioſitie (that he might know the number of them): thus did Sathan beginne to plant the roote of pride and inſolencie in the hart of Dauid, which as it is a vice in al men moſt odious, ſo to be in a Prince is moſt daungerous, and that for many cauſes. All which Sathan

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did well foreſee, when he maketh his aſſault vnto Dauid with the ſinne of preſumption firſt of all, for that of all other vices Princes are moſt eaſily drawne to pride and inſolencie, both bicauſe the nature of all men is moſt prone and apt to fall into pride in proſperitie, and for that Princes and high eſtates, being aduaunced to ſuch greatneſſe aboue all other men, haue ſo many occaſions to be puft vp with preſumption, if they be not mightily and maruelouſly defended by the ſingular grace of God. So that a Prince that is humble and lowly in heart, is one of the greateſt miracles of the world: and in deede ſo great a wonder, that it can not be brought to paſſe, but by him which onely worketh great maruelles. Thus Sathan beeing moſt malicious and moſte ſubtill in his malice, to bring his purpoſe to effect more ſpeedily, vſeth ſuch a meane, by whiche hee may worke moſt eaſily. Neyther hath hee regarde onely to the eaſineſſe of his enterpriſe, but that the ſame alſo is moſt apt to ouerthrowe the

the Churche and people of GOD. for by pride and insolencie, most of all other vices, a Prince is made vnapt to exercise his office and duetie. The office of a King standeth in two pointes. The first is, in maintenance of true religion: the second is prouision for the common wealth, and publique peace of his subiectes: but neither of these can he exercise to the glorie of God, & benefite of men, if his heart be ouercome with presumption: for touching the first, if pride possesse the heart of a King, he will either neglect religion altogether, or else thinke that he may doe and decree in religion what he list. If he neglect the cause of religion, he will haue no regard to set out Gods glorie, he passeth not whether ỹ worde of God be preached or not preached, whether the sacramentes be ministred or not ministred, discipline exercised or not, or whether all thinges be well done or yll done: finally he careth not whether religion goeth backward or forward. But if he will intermeddle with religion with a presumptuous & insolent

insolent minde, he wil imagine, that all things in religion are subiect to his wil and pleasure. *Uzzia* otherwise not the worst Prince, was so lifted vp with pride, that he vsurped the Priestes office, and would needes offer incense: but he was plagued for his presumption, and stricken of the Lorde with a leprosie. *Achas* commaunded *Urias* the high Priest to remoue the altar of the Lord out of his place, and to set vp an other altar of an other fashion, according to the patterne which he sent him from Damasco. *Ieroboam* thinketh it lawfull for him to chaunge the decree of GOD concerning worshipping at Hierusalem, and setteth vp an newe forme of worshippe in Dan and Bethel. *Saul* thinketh long to tarie for *Samuel*, and offereth sacrifice without him. These examples and many other doe shewe how dangerous to the state of religion, is the sinne of pride and presumption in the heart of a Prince. No maruell therefore, if Sathan which maliceth most the good proceedings in religion, that he might vndermine the

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tower of the church to the vtter ouerthrow of ỹ ſame, prepareth his way by puffing vp ỹ Kings heart with pride & inſolencie, knowing that he which is proude and inſolent towards men, can not be humble & obedient vnto God. The ſecond part of the office of a king is, to prouide for the common wealth, the peace and proſperitie of his ſubiectes, which can not be without great trauell and labour of minde and body. But if the Prince be ouercome with pride, he will neuer abaſe him ſelfe to take ſuch great paines as he ought to doe, for the benefite of other men in ſo difficult & dangerous a matter. Therefore *Moſes* in the 17. of Deuteronom. where he deſcribeth what manner a King is to be choſen by the Iſraelites, and what is the office of a King when he is elected, ioyneth both theſe partes together, and for the performance of the later, eſpecially admoniſheth them to beware of preſumption, when the King (ſaith he) ſhal ſit vpon the throne of his kingdome, he ſhal write out by a copie receiued of the Prieſtes, a booke

of

of the law of the Lord, and that ſhal be with him to read therin al the dayes of his life, ẏ he may proſper, and learne to feare the Lord his God, & to keepe al ẏ words of ẏ lawe to do thē: thus hauing preſcribed the booke of ẏ lawe to be ẏ directiō of his gouernmēt, as wel in religiō as in affaires of ẏ cōmon welth, to which burdē ẏ the king might ſubmit his ſhoulders, and not thinke ſcorne to beare it, he addeth īmediatly, ẏ his hart be not lift vp aboue his brethren, what meaneth *Moſes* by this, ẏ a king ſhould not ſhew him ſelfe to be a king. When by Gods ordinance he is aduaunced & lifted vp aboue all other men? no verily, he meaneth not ſo: but that the king is lifted vp aboue his brethren, to be a father vnto them, and to haue a fatherly care, which hee can not haue, if his heart be lifted vp aboue them to contemne them, whereas he ought not only to reteine his loue to them which he had before he was a king, as vnto his brethrē, but alſo to put on a greater affection of loue when he is a king, as of a father towards his children. Wherfore

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the meaning of *Moſes* is, that the Kings heart ſhould not be lifted vp aboue his brethren, to cõtemne them, to tread them vnder feete, to exerciſe tyrannie ouer them, but to be humble and lowly minded of loue, willingly, & chearfully to take ſuch trauels, and to ouercome ſuch difficulties, as is neceſſarie for all them which ſhall gouerne well, and to the profite of others. We ſee that naturall parentes, which haue the greateſt authority ouer their children of whom they are to be honoured, notwithſtanding their dignitie, doe willingly and gladly indure any trauell, which they thinke may be profitable and beneficiall to their children: euen ſo ought the parents of the countrie (whoſe honour & obedience is confirmed vnto them by none other, but euen by the ſame commandement) not diſdaine any labour, trauell, or induſtrie which is neceſſarie to be imployed, for the wealth and preſeruation of their ſubiects. But ſuch Princes as haue not learned out of Gods lawe to be humble, neither are led with the meeke ſpirit of Chriſt, but

with

with the proude ſpirit of Sathan will either thinke ſcorne to take paines for the ſafetie of their inferiours, or elſe by violence oppreſſe them, and treade them vnder feete. As though to gouerne were nothing elſe but to commaund, whereas cleane contrariwiſe, (as that noble Emperour *Theodoſius* ſaide) to gouerne, is to take charge of the health, wealth, and proſperitie of other men, which charge is ſo much the greater as they are more in number, which are vnder their gouernment. And wheras euery man findeth inough to do to take care for him ſelfe, and his owne well being, we ſee how heauie is ẏ burthen of Princes, and them that be in authoritie, which haue the charge, and are to prouide for the ſafetie of ſo many, and that with ſuch condition, ẏ if any one do periſh through their negligence or miſgouernement, his bloud ſhall be required at their handes. That vice therefore by which they are made vnapt and vnwilling to take ſo great a charge vpon them, howe daungerous it is, Sathan was not ignoraunt,

when he tempted Dauid with pride, as we may easily see. But all the danger is not yet expressed. For whereas it is not possible, that any one person, though his wisedome, care, and diligence be neuer so great, should beare the whole burthen him selfe of any greate gouernement or kingdome, all good gouernours haue thought it necessarie to vse the assistaunce of wise and faithfull counsel: so that in matters of religion they would decree nothing without the aduice of them which are learned in the worde of GOD: and in matters of the common wealth, they would attempt nothing, but by the counsel of them that are wise in politique affaires, thinking truely that to be subiect to wisedome, is to rule most honourably. But where pride preuayleth with any Prince, hee will neither giue eare to the messingers of God ỳ shall speake vnto him out of the law of GOD touching religion, nor followe the prudent aduice of trustie Counsellours, which shall informe him in matters pertayning to the Common wealth:

wealth: by which it is not possible that either the one or the other can be well ordered and gouerned. Therfore great is the daunger both vnto the Church and to the Common wealth: where the Prince groweth to be insolent and opinatiue, that alwayes thinking him selfe to see most clearely in euery matter, hee disdaineth to be directed after any counsell or aduice that can be giuen by any man. And therefore *Salomon* saith, seest thou one that is wise in his owne conceit, there is more hope of a foole, then of him: and this began to appeare euen in this example of Dauid. For when Sathan had stuffed his minde with a proud desire to know his forces, hee giueth no eare to *Ioab*, that with some reasons sought to dissuade him from so vaine an enterprise. Thus presumption causeth Princes to shut their eares against godly and prudent aduice of their Counsellours. And that which is worsse, when pride hath ouercome the Princes heart, hee shall hardly finde any that will giue faithfull and profitable counsell.

For when the Kinges humour is once perceiued, that he will heare no counſell which is contrarie to his affection, fewe or none will aduenture to ſpeake the truth, which they knowe will purchaſe them ſelues diſpleaſure . So the King being not defended with faithfull and truſtie Counſelours, lyeth open to clawbacks and flatterers, which will deuour him whileſt hee is aliue worſer then any wilde beaſtes , which pray onely vpon deade carcaſes . You ſee the drift of Sathans malice, in prouoking the Prince to pride, to leaue him bare of all ſuch neceſſarie helpes as he mayhaue rightly to diſcharge his office . But being deſtitute of all aſſiſtaunce vpon earth, is there any ayde trowe you to bee looked for out of heauen? no verily: for by pride the king maketh him ſelfe vncapable of that, whereby all Princes in ſolemne title profeſſe that they doe reigne, namely the grace of GOD , without which as it is not poſſible for any Prince to gouerne well, ſo no Prince can be partaker thereof that is thrall to pride,

and

and enimie to humilitie. For God hath ſaide in expreſſe wordes, that he reſiſteth the proude, and giueth grace to none but ſuch as are humble of heart, howe then can they proſper which haue God to their open enimie, which are voyd of all the grace of God, without which no King dare affirme, that he is able to gouerne well? wherefore it were a good remembraunce for all Kings and Princes, when ſo euer they read or heare their ſtyle rehearſed, that they would be admoniſhed howe neceſſary it is for them to be indued with humilitie, which if they be not, they may be well aſſured neuer to partake of Gods graces, to the good gouernement of their realmes, and diſcharge of their conſcience, whatſoeuer they pretend in their titles. Laſt of all, the conuerſion from this peryod of pride and preſumption is ſo daungerous, no leſſe for the ſtate of a Prince, then for the ſafetie of euery other perſon, that the moſt wiſe King Salomon, who well conſidered the beginning, proceeding, and end of al things (which is ẏ ground

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of

of wiſedome) doubteth not to affirme in the 16. of his Prouerbes, that pride goeth before deſtruction, and a high mind before ỹ fall. This when Sathan knewe by experience of his owne fall and deſtruction, he tempted Dauid to pride, wherof not only the inconueniences before rehearſed might inſue, but alſo the finall ouerthrowe and confuſion of Dauid and his kingdome might followe. The Lorde which preſerued Dauid, that Sathans malice had no full effect in him, defend al Chriſtian Princes from the like temptation, and giue them true humbleneſſe of heart, with all ſuch graces and giftes of his holy ſpirite, as are needfull to diſcharge ſo high a calling.

The thirde and laſt part I promiſed to intreate of, is the frailtie of man, which in this text is offered to be conſidered in two perſons. Firſt in the perſon of *Dauid*: and ſecondly in the perſon of *Ioab*. Concerning *Dauid*, I need not toſtand long in diſcouering his frailtie, not onely at this time, but at other times alſo, as it is ſet foorth in the

the Scripture, Howe excellent a man hee was, and howe plentifully indued with the graces and giftes of God, how noble a King, and howe godly a Prophet, I ſhall not neede to deſcribe, hee is ſufficiently knowne vnto you: and yet he is not exempted from the common fragilitie of men. Hee is highly commended in the Scriptures, and his example alledged for a patterne of all good Kings that followed him, and yet you ſee his Chronicle is blotted with this, & two or three other offences. Of whoſe fall we ought to make this profite to our ſelues, ẏ therein we may ſee our owne weaknes, and when we ſee our owne frailtie in an other mans faultes, we may be admoniſhed thereby to pray vnto the Lord for the continuall & mightie aſſiſtaunce of his holy ſpirite, ẏ ſeeing our weaknes is ſo great, we may alwayes finde his grace, whoſe power is made perfect in infirmitie to bee ſufficient for vs, ſo that although of frailtie wee fall often, yet by grace wee may alwayes riſe againe, ſo that wee neuer fall away.

Finally, we haue need (I say) in respect of our infirmitie, to pray for strength earnestly of God: for if Dauid being a man after Gods owne heart, did but trip, surely we are readie to fall downe right, & yet we see ẏ Dauid did not only slide out of the way of humane slipprinesse, but also did fall into some great and notorious offences. Dauid therefore was a Saint, but he was no Angell: it is an Angellike perfection to doe the wil of God in al things. The Saintes vpon earth must pray for the same, and contend to come as neare it as they can, and by their imperfection be instructed to humilitie, vntill by the grace of God in Iesus Christ they be brought into the same estate of perfection with the Angels. In the person of *Ioab* we haue to consider two thinges, first the aduice which he giueth: and secondly his execution of the Kinges commaundement, *Ioab* was a man as his storie declareth, indued with great courage, and diuers other good qualities: & yet not simply to be commended, for there were great faults in him.

He

He was a man in whō vertues & vices were almoſt equal, ſuch a one as *Alcibiades* is diſcribed of ẏ Greciās, & *Marius* of the Romanes. But his chiefeſt vertue was valiancie & courage, yet in his example he is noted by the holy ghoſt in giuing counſel to Dauid to be faint harted & cowardlik. For firſt ẏ holy ghoſt teſtifieth ẏ he vtterly miſliked this interpriſe of Dauid, and as a man wel acquainted with the affaires of ẏ realme, and knowing there was not iuſt cauſe why the people ſhould be muſtred, he did eaſily coniecture ẏ the kings commaundement proceaded of vaine prid and preſumption: & therefore hee had no good will to execute it. In ſo much that it is ſhewed in the booke of *Chronicles* that he did performe the Kings precept negligently, for he not onely omitted to number the tribe of *Leui* for which he might haue ſome excuſe, becauſe they were addicted to the ſeruice of religion, but alſo he left out the tribe of *Beniamin*. The reaſō is alledged becauſe the kinges cōmandement ſeemed abhominable vnto him, and as he

did abhorre and deteſt the kings com-
mandement, ſo he ſhewed diuerſe rea-
ſõs of his miſliking: for after proteſta-
tion of his goodwil & deſire of ỹ kings
honour, in ỹ he wiſhed the Lord might
increaſe the people an hundreth times
as many as there were, ỹ the king might
not ſuſpect him as one that refuſed to
take paines in his ſeruice, firſt he ſhew-
eth that there was no ſufficient cauſe
of this muſter, when hee ſaith, where-
fore doth my lord the king deſire this
thing: And againe hee ſaith are not
they all the ſeruauntes of my Lord the
king, For one cauſe of numbring the
people was vſed euen of heathen prin-
ces, that the ſubiectes thereby ſhould
profeſſe their obedience, but at this
time there was neither ſuſpition of war
abrode, nor rebellion at home. More-
ouer he did alſo inſinuate that the kings
tranſgreſſion would be ỹ cauſe of Gods
puniſhment to fall vppon the people,
where he ſaith, and why ſhoulde this
be an offence or guiltines vnto Iſrael?
by vſing theſe reaſons to diſwade the
king from his euill purpoſe hee mght
ſeeme

ſeeme to ſome men, to haue diſcharged the dutie of a truſtie and faithfull counſellour. But the holy Ghoſte noteth him of great frailtie and fainte hartednes, when he ſaith, neuertheles the kinges commaundement preuailed with *Ioab* and with the capitaines of the hoſte. The reſt ſeeing the kings humour held their peace & ſaid nothing onely *Ioab* vſeth ſome ſpeach to alter the kinges minde: but perceiuing with what affection the king was carried, he thought it was not beſt for him in policie to ſet himſelfe altogether againſt the kinges affection, though hee bare the kinge good will, and wiſhed to haue him remoued from that vnprofitable attempt, yet hee durſt not aduenture to incurre the kings diſpleaſure by doing his duetie throughly, and diſcouering ỹ hidden wound which he thought was to ſore to abide any ſharp medicine, for in ſuch a caſe as this hee thoght it was not beſt to be to earneſt & vehement a perſuader & ſo followed *Machiauils* philoſophie 2000. yeres and more before *Machiauil* was borne.

His

His cowardnes in this caſe is rather to be noted, for that at other times he had ſhewed great courage and valiantnes and giuen ſuch faithful aduiſe & counſell, that his example is worthie to bee followed of all good counſellours. For in the 19. Chap. of this booke we read that when Dauid after the ſlaughter of *Abſalom* yeelded ſo much to the naturall affection of a father, in lamenting for the death of his vnnatural ſon, that he forgot the duetie of a king, whi che was to encourage and rewarde his good ſubiectes for their ſeruice, in ſomuch that when ỹ people heard what lamentation hee made for *Abſalom* they were clean diſcouraged and came by ſtealth into the Citie, more like to men that had fled from the feelde, thē ſuch as had obtained ſo notable a victorie againſt the kings enimies. Aſſone as *Ioab* heard thereof hee came boldly into the kings preſence, and with great courage he did the duetie of a faithfull counſellour: for he tolde the Kinge of his fault plainely, and ſhewed him the daunger throughly, you haue diſcoura-

couraged (saith he) the hearts, & made ashamed the faces of all your faithfull seruauntes which haue deliuered your life; and the liues of your wiues, and of your sonnes and daughters, and haue established the kingdome this daye in your hand: you loue thē that hate you & hate thē that loue you. For you haue shewed this day that you make no accompte neither of your princes, nor of your people. For I perceiue if *Absalom* had liued, and all wee had beene slaine this day, you woulde haue beene well pleased with it. But nowe I aduise you leaue your mourning and goe forth & speake comfortably vnto the people, or else I sweare vnto you by the Lord, you will vtterly alienate the minds of your subiectes from you. So that you shal not haue one man tarrie with you this night. And this affliction shall bee greater then all the troubles and daungers you haue susteined euen frō your youth. Wherevpon Dauid arose, and went & encouraged his souldiers, so ỹ kingdom was established in his hands. you se how roughly & effectually *Ioab*

dealt

dealt with the king in that caſe. But at this time he is noted to haue dealt faintlie and timerouſly. For although hee appoſed ſome reaſon againſt the kings vnlawfull deſire, yet hee did it with a weake arme and ſo of frailtie fayled of his duetie. Concerning the execution of the kinges commaundemente there is ſome controuerſie. Whether *Ioab* ſhoulde haue obeyed the kinges precept, when he knewe it proceeded frō an euill affection. The time will not ſerue me to diſcuſſe the reaſōs on both the ſides: therfore I will ſpeake of the caſe briefly and generally. If the prince commaund any thing to be done whiche of it ſelfe is vnlawefull and againſt the commandement of God; that commandement of any ſubiecte is not to be excuted, for we are ſo boūd to obey earthly princes, that we diſobey not the God of heauen & earth, & therfore *Ioab* ſhold haue ſuffered death rather then to haue obeyed Dauids cōmaundement in betraying & murdering of *Urias* with ẏ ſword of ẏ Amonites, which was a faithfull ſubiect &

a valiant captaine, I say he should haue suffered death rather then to haue executed such a commandement: because ỳ fact was altogether vngodly & vnlawfull of his owne nature. But in this case where the fact of his owne nature was indifferent and lawfull of it selfe, as to number the people: in some cases is not onely lawfull but also necessarie. If *Ioab* had done his duetie throughly in admonishing the king of his corrupte affection and of the vengeance of GOD like to ensue if hee proceeded therein, and that when hee had done all that he could & ought to haue done to disswade him, his aduice woulde take no place, but the kinge would stil vrge his commandement, & enforce *Ioabs* obediẽce, I see no cause, but ỳ he might haue executed ỳ kings cõmandemẽt: the conclusiõ of ỳ whole matter, because I see ỳ time is past, & I would be looth to abuse your honorable patience too long, in few wordes is this. The iustice of God is set foorth to this ende, that wee might bee affraide by sinne to prouoke his wrath, the

the malice of Sathan is deſcribed, that we might be carefull to beware of it and by faith to withſtande it, the frailtie of man is ſhewed, that ſeeing our weakeneſſe wee might bee humbled thereby, and taught to ſeeke for ſtrength only at the hands of GOD, whoſe grace through our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt ſhall bee ſufficient for vs, To whome with the holy Ghoſt one eternall and euerlaſting God bee all honour and glory wolde without end.

Amen.